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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/730,325	12/08/2003	Jerome Skuba	Skuba-P1-03	2418

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EXAMINER	
PALO, FRANCIS T	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3644	

DATE MAILED: 01/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/730,325	SKUBA, JEROME	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Francis T. Palo	3644	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *08 December 2003*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-15* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-15* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *08 December 2003* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

Appropriate correction is required.

The Priority Data introductory paragraph should be updated to reflect the patent status of Application 10/041,106.

Claim Objections

Claims 1 and 3 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Appropriate correction is required.

Regarding claim-1:

In the 4th line; "corresponding a portion" should be --corresponding to a portion--.

Regarding claim-3:

In the 1st line; "design implemented" should be --design is implemented--.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Milstein (US 4,941,282) 1990 in view of

Yankee Gardener (seeded flower mat supplier).

Regarding **claim-1**:

Milstein teaches manufacturing, propagating, harvesting and transporting wildflower sod mats, thus providing the consumer with an established flower mat with viable germinated seedlings (Abstract, and page-4 at line-1).

Milstein does not specifically disclose the steps of forming and implementing a design for a garden.

Yankee Gardener teaches shaped flower seed mats and discloses numerous possible design configurations (Candytuft Flower Ring, page-9).

The method steps of the instant claim would be readily apparent to a consumer (landscaper or end user) of the Milstein mat(s) in view of the Yankee Gardener sample design layouts.

Regarding **independent claim-2**:

The instant claim appears to be a rewording of claim-1 with the addition of specifically citing a plant mat; the rejection of instant claim-1 as discussed above is applicable to claim-2.

Regarding **claim-3**:

The discussion above regarding claim-2 is relied upon.

Milstein teaches wildflower sod mats as cited in the instant claim.

Regarding **claims 4 and 5**:

The discussion above regarding claim-3 is relied upon.

Yankee Gardener teaches mixed mats of annuals and perennials and various mats of flowering plant combinations capable of use in the sample design layouts; the designs of Milstein as modified are capable of the designs cited in the instant claims.

Regarding **claims 6-13:**

The discussion above regarding claim-3 is relied upon.

The discussion above regarding claims 4 and 5 is applicable to the instant claims.

Regarding **claims 14 and 15**:

The discussion above regarding claims 6 and 7 is relied upon.

The designs of Milstein as modified are capable of the designs cited in the instant claims, broadly as weed grass seed germinated with the organic flower mix.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970);and, *In re Thorington,* 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-15 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 25 and 26 of U.S. Patent No. 6,336,291.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the methods of the instant independent claims are encompassed by the conflicting independent claim-25, and the instant dependent claims are encompassed by the conflicting claim-26.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Otwell '274, Koton '667, Ripley '834 and Turley '601 teach garden design.

Molnar '290 teaches herb, vegetable, flower and groundcover sod mats for landscape applications.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Francis T. Palo whose telephone number is 703-305-5595. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Tu.,Th.-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teri Luu can be reached on 703-305-7421. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Francis T. Palo

Francis T. Palo
Examiner
Art Unit 3644